A VISIT TO MOLOKAI

Where Helpless Lepers Spend Their Few Remaining Years.

HOW THEY LIVE AND WEAT THEY DO

Even With Them Life is Not Altogether Cheerless.

LONG DRAWN OUT TRAGEDIES

Written for The Evening Star.



TOT LONG AGO I alone" in the mid-Pacifice paradise of the Hawalian Islands. My observations among those who, like the afflicted children of Israel, have habitations apart from their own

ternational leprosy conference in Berlin. The conference decided that the leprosy bacillus is the true cause of the disease. which makes the blood creep with slower pace and deadens nerve and muscle till life itself sloughs away. The conclusion of the conference that leprosy is contagious, but not hereditary, may be simply an expression of opinion accepted or not by scientists. The declaration that isolation is desirable will be questioned by no one whose experience has taken him among the le pers in any country. The system of isolation in its methods

and results may be seen to advantage in Hawali. The Levitical law has been observed by the government for a full generation. The Mcsaic decree of segregation is enforced with impartial inflexibility. The application is softened in cutward form. Mildners and persuasion are the rule in dealing with individual cases, but the wel-fare of the whole community is the paramount consideration.

The leper settlement on the Island of Molokal is not maintained as a resort for tourists. It is not meant to be an attraction for travelers, and access to it is not made easy in order that the curlous-minded may gratify a passing interest. But no obstacles other than those which naturally exist are placed in the way of legitimate inquiry. The settlement is under the control of the board of health, of which the attorney general is president. No person can set foot on the peninsule landing at Kalaupapa without an official permit. The leard of health comes to inspect the place twice a year-in May and November, respectively. Some of the members visit it between times. Physicians and scientists from all corners of the world who may happen to be in those parts rarely fail to improve their stay by journeying to the settlement. Morbidness is discouraged by the authorities. Picture-taking of the lepers is prohibited, just as it is forbidden to take photographs of the patients in hospitals. Regard for the feelings of the afflicted class and for their friends and relatives forbids the use of names.

Seldom Scen.

After a two months' stay in the islands, I could readily understand why so few persons in Honolulu have ever seen the leper colony. It is for the same reason that the wards of the hospitals in the great cities are unknown to all except those whose professional relations take them there, or whose kin are inmates. Disease lists everywhere, but people do not seek is know more of it than comes to them in-oluntarily. It was easy to credit the satement that the great majority of peoexists everywhere, but people do not seek to know more of it than comes to them involuntarily. It was easy to credit the statement that the great majority of people in Honolulu had never seen a leper. The afflicted do not walk abroad or stretch forth fingerless palms craving alms, or cry out, "Unclean, unclean," to the compassionate almsgiver who thoughtlessly seeks to approach them. The horsel head seems are not homes of despair. Horses and cows are owned by every family. Many of the lepers are met on horseback. They like riding, and they do some furious riding, too. Coffee houses are plentiful. They like riding, and they do some furious riding, too. Coffee houses are not homes of despair. parsignate almsgiver who thoughtlessly seeks to approach them. The bared head, the rent garment and the covered lip are not the signs of the legers in Hawaii. The government makes them its own charge, provides for their needs, ministers to their sufferings. All this is not done in public places. A young physician, the first seventeen years of whose life was passed on the islands, told me he never saw a leper until one was pointed out to him in San Francisco.

Voyaging to the settlement on Melaket

Voyaging to the settlement on Molokai Voyaging to the settlement on Molokal does not encourage frequent trips. An invitation to go with a number of physicians and scientists for whose benefit the government had chartered a vessel enabled me to make the voyage. The experience of getting there was a chapter in itself. The thirst for knowledge does not render a cargoeless and ballastless boat proof against head winds and a churning current from goeless and ballastless boat proof against head winds and a churning current from unknown depths of the sea. A long night was needed to cover the fifty miles from Honolulu, which is ordinarily a six hours' passage. In the morning a spiritless set of medical and scientific gentlemen crawled on deck. They had passed an uneven night on the floor of the cabin, with their footgear for pillows and their common misery for consolation. Had the choice been forced upon them at that moment between life banishment on land among the lepers and the return to Honolulu, they would have chosen to stay. have chosen to stay.

A Leper Village.

Kalaupapa, the chief leper village, is not easily reached. It is the only landing place on the tengue of land which leaps out from the foot of the lofty cliffs into the ocean. The settlement is not an unpleasant sight It differs from most Hawaiian coast villages in not having a fringe of algabora trees or cocoa palms. Once the place must have been desolate. It is not so now. The cottages which dot it are neat, most of them set back in well-kept yards, some of them in the midst of gardens and trees. The place will be more pleasing to the eye when the water which is piped down from a natural reservoir in the mountains is increased and vegetation and tree growing given encouragement. We were fortunate in having a fairly smooth sea so that a landing was assured us. Often the waters are so rough that a small boat cannot put off from the vessel. Sometimes when it does the rocks, which form the landing place, can be reached only at peril of life. Beyond the chip of a steamer which makes regular trips in an irregular way once of twice in a month and the boat which brings patients to the colony, the coming of a vessel is a rare event at Kalzungers. have been desolate. It is not so now. The coming of a vessel is a rare event at Kalcoming of a vessel is a rare event at Kal-aupapa. So our arrival, unlocked for as it was, brought most of the population down to the shore. There is no beach. The small boys who were clustered along the water's edge like sea gulls watched us with the curious interest village lads always show in the coming of strangers. Further back on shore their elders, men and women, stood with expectant looks. Visitors break the monotony and are al-ways welcome. Clambering up the rocks our first act was to hand the indispensable official permits to a man with green goggles official permits to a man with green goggles official permits to a man with green goggles ever his eyes. The story is that the board of health issues a permit to itself when the half yearly visits are made, and the officer scans it as closely as he does the document which permits the landing of strangers.

An Outline Picture.

Imagination is sometimes more suggestive than the thing itself. An outline picture of the people that watched us that morning, a passing glimpse of faces seamed and gnarled, had in it nothing extraordinary. Some visages, perhaps, we would just as lief not have looked upon, but they were not many. I afterward learned that this is so of the entire settlement. Some this is so of the entire settlement. Some there are that tell in a single glance what may happen to the image of God's creat-ures, and pity shames wonder in the ob-server's feelings. If the imagination were server's receings. If the imagination were to frame its picture of the leper settlement on Molokai from these, a fearful one it would be. Happily this need not be. The greater number are not so afflicted that their existence is a blight in the sight.

of others.

After coming ashore it is a zigzag walk to After coming asmore it is a zigzag walk to the inclosure wherein is the residence of the superintendent, and also the strangers' house. The walk affords views of the cot-tages, their interiors and their occupants. Most of the occupants, however, are with-out. In this settlement the scriptural rule

is reversed. The dweller in the "several house" is the non-leper. The isolation is for him. The lepers are not permitted to enter the grounds of the strangers' and the superintendent's houses, which are surrounded by an ordinary fence. For the superintendent this isolation means nothing, for he is daily and hourly among them. For the visiting stranger it is—well, perhaps, immunity from imagined and imaginary dangers. At all events, the isolation enabled us that Sunday morning to watch ary dangers. At all events, the isolation enabled us that Sunday morning to watch the lepers' church-going. They came on horseback, both sexes, and hitched their horses just as is done at the Sunday morning service in thousands of villages in the United States. They poured out of the cot-tages, exchanged greetings and tarried at the church doors for a moment's neighbor-ly talk. Frem the Bishon Home a troop of young girls, marshaled by the mother superior and the sisters, took their way in double file to the Catholic Church.

Lepers at Church.

We wandered down among the churches where the leners were worshiping. The Y. M. C. A. Hall, in which afternoon services are held, was opened for our inspection by a leper who hobbled over from one of the cottages with the key. It is a comfertable and well-appointed building. The doors and windows of the Protestant Church were open. We could see the benches crowded with pupils and hear the Senday school classes clattering with questions and answers. The responses which floated out on the soft air were full of heartiness. Later the singing swelled forth with Methodistic volume. We mingled also with Methodistic volume. We mingled also with the groups of communicants from the people, were taken a little before the meeting of the inthe misforture fate has put upon her was tenderly helped down the steps by two native women. Young girls came out, their arms twined around each other. The Mormons also have their they box of a church with some members. That morning two of the Mormon missionates were at the the Mormon missionaries were at the strangers' house, and later they gathered together a handful of worshipers.

At the Bishop Home. The natural sequence to seeing the church-goers was to visit the Bishop Home, the institution maintained for leper girls and young women. It is in charge of the Franciscan Sisters. In the school room and the dormitories cleanliness and order were almost painfully visible. It was good to know that most of the inmates were not among the sorely afflicted. They enjoyed the presence of visitors, scampered over the premises and behaved as school girls everypremises and behaved as school girls every-where might behave under the same cir-cumstances. Not all of them. A girl of twelve or thirteen years, whose comely features were as vet barely marred by a scarred seam, catching sight of the visit-ors convulsively hid her face in her hands and ran sobbing to a corner of the room. It was a flash of human nature instantly illuminating the pathos of the leners' ex-istence. The years may be many till the istence. The years may be many till the disease claims the final accounting from this young victim. But the inevitable end is there, and the intervening years of girlhood and young womanhood. The instinctive realization of it all by this child of thirteen—could she but shut it out as she shut out the sight of the strangers. That may not be. A Miriam of tender age as shut out the sight of the strangers. That may not be. A Miriam of tender age, as one dead yet living, the future can bring no cleam of hore into her nathetic life. After that sight the gentle invitation of the mother superior, "Come and see our sick ones" was unheeded by me. and I wandered back to the strangers' house and aweited the return of the physicians from their visit to the hospital patients.

The Indolence of Disease. Kalaupapa is not the original leper settlement. That is at Kalawao, across the hase of the peninsula. It is a short half hour on horseback. The road is a good one running close to the foot of the cliffs. It is in reality a village street, for cottages line it. Many of the cottages are in the midst of gardens, others are barren in their surroundings. All might be made attractive except for the indolence of their occupants. The government does not press work upon them. In a disease which benumbs the muscles and each day spreads the languor of a deepening sleep over the faculties, it is difficult to draw the line and say who are capable of labor. But these homes are not homes of despair. There are other ailments, for leprosy gives no immunity from common maladies. But these signs are no warnings of disease. They simply mean that "poi" is to be had within. "Poi" is the food of food among the Hawaiians. Cheery greetings are given us as we ride along. Every cottage has its group of occupants stretched lazily on the floor or sitting out in front enjoying the sunshine and the mild sea breeze. One family cries us a merry "aloha." which is Hawaiian for "howdydo," and a good many other things besides.

The Original Settlement. Kalawao, though the original settlement is less of a village than Kalaupapa. The Protestant Chapel and Father Damien's Church are close together. The simple monument in the churchyard with the plain inscription, "Father Damien," can be seen from the roadside. The martyred priest's memory lives and he needs no pretentious monument. The Baldwin Home for boys and men is located here. It is under the charge of the Christian Brothers. Everything about it is well appointed. Here, too, I left the physicians to visit the sick ones and contented myself with seeing the well ones among the lepers. Most of the inmates were youths of good physical appearance, not yet scarred by the scourge. Riding on to Waihanau val-ley it was not possible to repress our ad-miration for the beauty of the scene. The the island rocks are as grim as anything that may be seen off the Atlantic coast. Coming upon a group of leper children far up in one of the gorges, it was for all the

up in one of the gorges, it was for all the world a picture of happy youth, care-free and unconscious of any shadow hanging over the future.

There are several trails over the steep precipices. I do not think more than a nominal guard is kept to prevent the escape of lepers. Probably if they wanted to do so, many of them could wander away and scale the cliffs. Escapes, so called, are occasionally reported. But called, are occasionally reported. But when they are once on the settlement lit-tle desire is shown to get away. The sur-roundings are pleasant and the comforts roundings are pleasant and the comforts are greater than most of the lepers have previously known. If they should follow the trais, several of which have been closed, these only lead along "palis" or precipices and through forest wildernesses down to the ocean on the other side of Molokai. There is no getting off from the island itself, and passing boats do not pick up fuglitives. not pick up fugitives.

A Distressing Feature.

Riding back to Kalaupapa I was struck with the number of persons whose eyesight seemed to be affected. That is one of the most distressing features of the disease, which in itself commonly is not painful. The graveyards, too, are numerous. We had all seen and heard enough to ask intelligently about the conditions of leper life as it is lived in this camp set apart from the world for those who are as dead to the world. Imagination and fiction have caus-ed much to be written that never happened. Stories have been told that were literally news to those whose functions give them the means of knowing what goes on. The realities are enough without invention or imagination. The management of the setrealities are enough without invention or imagination. The management of the settlement is wholly by the government. While autocratic authority is possessed it is seldom exercised in an autocratic manner. The regulations are like those of a great hospital camp. They relate mainly to hygiene, sanitation and kindred matters. The land belongs to the government, but the lepers are permitted to build and own their own cottages, of which there are more than 300 at Kalaupapa and Kalawao. They have their own horses, cattle, dogs and some have sheep. Where they will, they cultivate gardens of their own. The government issues to them from the store, or provision house, rations twice a week. These rations consist of beef, "poi," fish, rice, flour and other food staples. It also gives them an annual "clothes rations" allowance of \$10.

amusements of their own. The government does not interfere with their diversions. It encourages them. There is a lock-up or jail, which seldom has a prisoner. The lepers are great letter writers, as are all Hawaiians. In this way they keep up communication with their friends and relatives on the other blands. Correspondup communication with their friends and relatives on the other islands. Correspondence from Molokal is had without the use of postage stamps. The letters are disinfected and fumigated before the mail bag leaves the island. The Kalaupapa postmark carries them everywhere in Hawaii. As may be supposed, the medical regulations are strict, but the resident physicians exercise a professional and not a civil authority. Under all these conditions, neither Kalaupapa nor Kalawao is a community of misery.

misery.

What have the years taught about this disease? As to its cure, nothing. As to the betterment of the lepers' existence and the lessening of their suffering, much. The treatment is an improvement on former years. Experimental treatment, too, has been encouraged and is still encouraged. been encouraged, and is still encouraged within reasonable limits. Scientists have come to the settlement, studied patiently for years, practiced, benefited some, left others in doubt, and have gone away baffled as to a cure for leprosy. I might offend an honored profession by saying that the disease, so far as human curative agency goes, is where it was 5,000 years ago, when Moses gave the law of segregation to the Israelites, yet that would merely be repeating what was told me by those who spoke from personal knowledge and experispoke from personal knowledge and experi-ence. At present, what is known as the Japanese treatment is giving good results. Medicated baths are had from waters pos-sessing the same chemical properties as the natural springs in Japan, to which resort is had beneficially by leprous persons. They are caustic in their nature. We visited the bath houses and had the system explained. It is not dissimilar to the ordinary medi-

Faith in Medicine Men.

I was told that the lepers now show greater willingness to follow a medical regimen. A passive race believing the illness is a supernatural one, for a long time they had a fatalistic indifference to treatment. Moreover, their faith was in the 'kahuna lapaaus' or medicine men. The kahuna is a sorcerer who cures by incanor her-for the kahuna is often a womanand even when white physicians are em-ployed the kahuna is likely to be called in secretly. In the early days of the lever settlement kahunalsm was rampant. Now it is said to be less resorted to among the lepers than among the native Hawaiians

generally.

I am not going to write a scientific treatise, and shall not enter fully into vital statistics. Whether the disease is increas-ing or decreasing must be judged in a genoral way. The authorities say it is less prevalent than formerly. That it is not increasing seems conclusively established. dred lepers on Molokai. The annual death rate is a trifle over 10 per cent, not a large one, relatively. It is apparently decreas-ing, but this may be due to the fact that the leners are now brought to the settle-ment in the earlier stages of the disease. Seven years is said to be the extreme Seven years is said to be the extreme period during which the bacillus may be in the blood before its manifestations are known. Four years is stated to be the period before a fully developed case reaches the fatel end, but this gives a wrong idea of the mortality. It may be a question what constitutes a fully developed case. I was told that in most instances, even with adults, twelve years of sluggish existence could be counted ahead. The condience could be counted ahead. The condi-tions of the settlement, the open air, the medical attendance, the nursing given each case, are all favorable to prolonging life. The last stage is paralytic, and the casual visitor sees few decrepit cases. He also sees more instances of nerve palsy, or atrophy, than of the nodular, or repulsive forms. Yet for them all there is the same

Disease is Contagious.

I was informed that it is rare for more than one case of leprosy to be developed in one household or family. That might support the conclusion of the Borlin medical conference that the disease is contagious, but not hereditary. Whether a South Sea Islander or a native of China brought it to this paradise may be in doubt, but those who have studied it seem to agree that its spread is due more to inoculation than to hereditary taint. I noticed most of the members of our party showed their belief in the theory of inoculation by wearing thick gloves, lest a chance touch might prove contagious, but this precaution did not impress the non-learney neonle at the not impress the non-leprous people at the settlement. The presence of the "kokuas," or helpers, seems to be another proof of comparative immunity. There are one hundred and fifty of these now at the settlement. Often they are relatives of the lepers, who have been permitted to come with the patients, but frequently they are simply lifted nurses. They must leave the settlement within a fortnight after the death of their patient. The cases of leprosy which develop among these "kokuas," or helpers, does not exceed 10 per cent.

Support for the theory of incculation is not impress the non-leprous people at the Support for the theory of incculation is given by the white lepers. Among the eleven hundred lepers on the island there are just a dozen Americans and Europeans. several of these are men who had been in the habit of working among the natives, and whose trade called for the handling of edged tools. A chance cut, rossibly a bad condition of the blood, careless contact, and in a few years the disease which affles medical science. Others of the baffles medical science. Others of the white men there could not trace back the origin of the disease. Inherited, they were sure it was not. One man who regularly draws a handsome income from property in Honoluiu had traveled the world over seeking relief. Driven from pillar to post in the United States, he finally came back to Molokai to end his days. A white man with whom I talked among the group at the Catholic Church in the merning afterward told me he had had "a touch" of the ward told me he had had "a touch" of the trouble a few years ago, and had come to the settlement for that reason. He had not since then been bothered. But he will never leave Kalaupapa. The touch that is in his blood will keep him on the peninsula for the remainder of his days, though they bid fair to be long. Others, too, are at the settlement who have had what they think is "just a touch," but they will remain. I heard of no cases where the diagnosis of

the physicians had proven wrong or had resulted in sending non-leprous persons to Kalaupapa. A Wholesome Existence.

heard of no cases where the diagnosis of

The lepers who are on Molokai seem to be fully satisfied with their surroundings. If their blood is unwholesome, they are at least able to lead a wholesome existence. I talked with a number of them, not about the disease itself, but about the daily routine. They are cheerful and contented. The consciousness that they are doomed, that the cliffs and the sea are for them a prison, from which death is the only release, does not seem to weigh on their spirits. The leper settlement is terrible only before it is known. With better only before it is known. With better knowledge of what the settlement is, the antipathy of the natives to it is disappearing. Sometimes, when the signs of "the bad sickness," as they call it, appear, their families try to hide it, but sometimes, too, they go to the government physician and ask for an examination. They are ready ask for an examination. They are ready to leave their homes for the settlement if the doctor pronounces it "the bad sick-ness." They are taken to the Kahili receiving station or detention hospital at Hono-lulu, and remain long enough to have the presence of the disease fully established before they are removed to Molokai.

Heroic Tragedies. In this colony of living death there are heroic tragedies dragging out day by day. Among the lepers we talked with was the son of a former cabinet minister. He has a trace of white blood in his veins. He has been on the peninsula for many years. His executive abilities are conspicuous. He has been intrusted with much responsibility by the government, and has shown himself worthy of it. His services have been almost priceless in the administration of the affairs of the settlement. He is still fertile in suggestion and active in practical improvement. But his faculties are not quite as strong and clear as they were a while they cultivate gardens of their own. The government issues to them from the store, or provision house, rations twice a week. These rations consist of beef, "pol," fish, rice, flour and other food staples. It also gives them an annual "clothes rations" allowance of \$10.

They Toil Not.

They Toil Not.

Their friends are permitted to send them supplies. Their life is the ordinary life of a Hawaiian village, with daily labor left out. They ride, fish, visit, gossip, have

cept and example have been his in improv-ing the conditions among the lepers. I watched him as he talked with animation and without constraint, and thought of the heroes whose heroms is not emblasoned in the glory of arms

Marriages Among Lepers. The question of morals and of science is not for discussion in this narrative of an incidental visit. There are marriages births and deaths at Kalaupapa and Kala-wao, as in other parts of the world. Father Damien was an earnest advocate of intermarriage among the lepers as a means of improving the morality of the settlement. The government maintains in Honolulu a home for the non-leprous children of home for the non-leprous children of leprous parents. They are segregated at an early age. That is about as much as any government agency can do. Some of the physicians in our party were fresh from a visit to China and Japan, where no attempt is made at isolating the suffers from the healthy members of the community. Others had studied leprosy in the settlement at St. Christophs in the West Indies, at Colombia in South America, where segregation is not attempted, and in Norway. Their common verdict was that the disease was better handled in Hawaii than anywhere that had come within their experwas better handled in Hawaii than anywhere that had come within their experience. I assily the ultimate disappearance of it will come in Itawaii from the circumstance that the native Hawaiian race is a decreasing race. In the ethnological serse it may be said to be a dying race. With the decrease of this race, leprosy in the Pacific dies.

Farewell to Kalaupapa. Reflections on this subject came to us all that evening as our vessel took its departure. The leper band came down to serenade us. It is one of the institutions of the settlement, and its services are in frequent demand. Its members were neat white uniforms. They played with spirit and vigor. As to the sight which their upturned faces presented I had rather not write. The people who had been at the landing in the morning to welcome us were there in the evening to speed our gates. landing in the morning to welcome us were there in the evening to speed our going. My own last view of Kalaupapa was of the leper boys who were playing among the rocks. Their playground is forever shut in by the cliffs and the waters of the sea.

CHARLES M. PEPPER.

Against Sunday Schools

Chicago Dispatch to the New York Times. The Rev. Wm. Swensen created a sensa tion at the Methodist ministers' meeting today by severely criticising Sunday schools. "Many a time," he said, "instead of teaching the lesson, the Sunday school teacher amuscs her pupils by telling what a nice time she had at the theater the night before."

"In a large number of Sunday schoo he said, early in his address, "more than one-hal" the teachers are unconverted men and women."
Sunday school picnics and entertainments then came in for denunciation as well as all other affairs of a frivolous and social nature. He declared that the Sunday school had become more of a social organization than a school of religious thought. "Often-times," he said, "the Sunday school teacher is chosen more on account of social standing than loyalty to Christ and the church. This accounts for the astounding irreverence which characterizes the Protestant

End of the Argument.

From the Cleveland Leader. "If I were in your shoes," said Mrs. Doncaster, "I would-" "Hold on right there." interrupted Mrs

Burbeck, "let us not go beyond the realm of possibilities."

Three seconds later the front dcor went shut with a loud bang."

Fam'ly Compliments. From the Detroit Free Press.

"You're no longer a spring chicken," sneered the angry husband.
"But you're the same old goose," came the answer, with a snap.

Mosher-"What are you doing with all Mosner— what are you doing with an those bits of card in your pocket?"
Wiswell—"They are seat checks at different theaters. It says on each. "Retain this check." It's an awful bore, don't you know, to be obliged to carry so much pasteboard around. But, then, what's a fellow to do?'—Boston Transcript.

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je7 Schedule in effect October 10, 1897.

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Through trains from the south arrive at Washington, 6:42 a.m., 2:20 p.m. and 9:25 p.m. daily, except Sunday, and 8:30 a.m. daily from Charlotteaville.

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For Alexandria (Sanday only), 8:00, 9:00, 10:00, 10:30, 11:00, 11:39 n.m., 12:00 noon, 12:30, 1:00, 13:30, 2:00, 2:30 3:90 3:30, 4:00, 4:30, 5:00, 5:30, 6:00, 6:30, 7:00, 8:00, 9:00, 10:00, 11:29 p.m.

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Dyke and Riverside: 7:00 p.m.

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